(b) the total number of branches of nationalised banks in the country during the same period;

(c) the number of branches of scheduled banks and the nationalised banks in Kerala during the said period;

(d) the total amount of deposits made during the said period in these banks all over India and in Kerala, separately; and

(e) the deposit-credit ratio of these banks in the State during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). The total number of branches of Scheduled Commercial Banks and Nationalised banks operating in the country and in Kerala as on 31st March 1995 and March 1996 as reported by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is given below:-

Scheduled Commercial Banks	*March 1995*	*March 1996*
All India	62,067	64,458
Kerala	3,009	3,151
Nationalised Banks		
All India	30,633	32,175
Kerala	970	1,022

(d) and (e). RBI has further reported that aggregate deposit and Credit : Deposit Ratio of all Scheduled Commercial Banks and Nationalised Banks, both All India and In Kerala as on the last Friday of March 1995 and March 1996 are given below:

(Amount in Rs. Lakhs)

All Scheduled Commercial Banks		*March 1995*	*March 1996*
All India	: Deposits	375863.97	426073.37
	: C:D Ratio	59.2	61.9
Kerala	: Deposits	17040.77	19792.83
	: C:D Ratio	44.9	45.4
Nationalised Banks			
All India	: Deposits	214051.09	237512.64
	: C:D Ratio	52.3	54.2
Kerala	: Deposits	6468.53	7132.05
	: C:D Ratio	36.8	40.0

Abolition of Sales Tax

2723. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGRAWAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any representation in June, 1996 from All India Trade Confederation and also from some Members of Parliament under caption "Abolition of Sales Tax and imposition of additional excise duty in its place as has been done in case of textiles, tobacco, paper and sugar earlier by the Central Government";

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) A representation dated 19.6.96 was received from the Federation of All India Traders' Associations on the said subject.

(b) and (c). No proposal to charge additional excise duty in lieu of sales tax on all commodities is under consideration of the Government. Any such proposal has to be mooted by the States.

BHEL Office in Kerala

2724. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up an office of the BHEL in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Monetary Autonomy/Economic Freedom to States

2725. SHRI SOUMYA RANJAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any demand for granting monetary autonomy/economic freedom to the States; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The Centre-State financial relationship is governed by the Constitution of India. The States have a separate Consolidated Fund, contingency fund and a Public Account of their own. Subject to various provisions of the constitution, States are financially autonomous and are accountable to their respective State legislatures.

However, the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State Relations relating to the legislative, administrative and financial matters, etc. are being considered by the Sub-Committee appointed by the Inter-State Council. The Sub-committee has so far considered 190 out of 247 recommendations. The remaining recommendations are yet to the finalised by the Sub-Committee. After consideration by the Sub-Committee, these recommendations will be placed before the Inter-State council. The view of the Inter-State Council, thereafter will be submitted to the Government for its consideration and decision.